

ROBBEN FORD



BLUES

FOR GUITAR

music, tablature
and analysis



The first 48 bars (Hotlines 1-19) though broken up into lines of 2, 3 and 4 bars, are actually a series of four 12 bar Blues progressions and can be played that way. The idea is to give you some sense of flow, and also help learn the form of 12 bar Blues.

HOTLINE # 1

The opening line here is a classic blues line. Observe the jump from the first Bb eighth note on the E string to the second one on the B string. Subtle changes like this are very important in Blues playing.

Hotline #1 consists of three measures of music. The first measure is in the key of Bb (two flats) and features a Bb7 chord. The second measure is in the key of Eb (three flats) and features an Eb7 chord. The third measure is in the key of Bb (two flats) and features a Bb7 chord. The notation includes guitar and bass staves with fingerings and fret numbers.

Measure (1): Bb7 chord. Guitar: Bb (5th fret, 1st string), Bb (5th fret, 2nd string), Bb (5th fret, 3rd string), Bb (5th fret, 4th string). Bass: Bb (5th fret, 1st string), Bb (5th fret, 2nd string), Bb (5th fret, 3rd string), Bb (5th fret, 4th string).

Measure (2): Eb7 chord. Guitar: Eb (5th fret, 1st string), Eb (5th fret, 2nd string), Eb (5th fret, 3rd string), Eb (5th fret, 4th string). Bass: Eb (5th fret, 1st string), Eb (5th fret, 2nd string), Eb (5th fret, 3rd string), Eb (5th fret, 4th string).

Measure (3): Bb7 chord. Guitar: Bb (5th fret, 1st string), Bb (5th fret, 2nd string), Bb (5th fret, 3rd string), Bb (5th fret, 4th string). Bass: Bb (5th fret, 1st string), Bb (5th fret, 2nd string), Bb (5th fret, 3rd string), Bb (5th fret, 4th string).

HOTLINE # 2

The first 2 eighth notes here are played first by pulling the G string from an Eb note to an F note, then hitting the 2nd eighth on the B string, similar to Hotline #1. The 2 notes in the 2nd bar are the 5th and 3rd of the IV chord (Eb7) of the Blues progression, spelling, or sounding out the key change.

Hotline #2 consists of two measures of music. The first measure is in the key of Bb (two flats) and features a Bb7 chord. The second measure is in the key of Eb (three flats) and features an Eb7 chord. The notation includes guitar and bass staves with fingerings and fret numbers.

Measure (4): Bb7 chord. Guitar: Bb (5th fret, 1st string), Bb (5th fret, 2nd string), Bb (5th fret, 3rd string), Bb (5th fret, 4th string). Bass: Bb (5th fret, 1st string), Bb (5th fret, 2nd string), Bb (5th fret, 3rd string), Bb (5th fret, 4th string).

Measure (5): Eb7 chord. Guitar: Eb (5th fret, 1st string), Eb (5th fret, 2nd string), Eb (5th fret, 3rd string), Eb (5th fret, 4th string). Bass: Eb (5th fret, 1st string), Eb (5th fret, 2nd string), Eb (5th fret, 3rd string), Eb (5th fret, 4th string).

HOTLINE # 3

The first note here (high F) should sound drawn out, like you are really pulling on it. This is a subtle phrasing technique which I hope you can hear on the tape. The point is to exaggerate the bend a little.

Hotline #3 musical notation. The staff shows a sequence of notes with bends (B, RB, PO) and fret numbers (13, 9, 11). The guitar tablature (TAB) is provided below the staff, showing fret numbers (13, 9, 11) and string numbers (3, 2, 1). The notation includes a 3rd fret bend (B) and a 13th fret bend (RB) on the 3rd string, and a 9th fret bend (PO) on the 2nd string. The guitar tablature shows the corresponding fret numbers and string numbers.

HOTLINE # 4

In this line again the Bb eighth notes in the 1st bar are played first on the E string and then on the B string, creating a certain tension. The phrase in the 2nd bar plays right off the V chord (F7) spelling out the chord for the listener.

Hotline #4 musical notation. The staff shows a sequence of notes with bends (PO) and fret numbers (13, 9, 10, 8, 10). The guitar tablature (TAB) is provided below the staff, showing fret numbers (13, 9, 10, 8, 10) and string numbers (3, 2, 1, 3). The notation includes a 13th fret bend (PO) on the 3rd string, a 9th fret bend (PO) on the 2nd string, and a 10th fret bend (PO) on the 1st string. The guitar tablature shows the corresponding fret numbers and string numbers.

HOTLINE # 5

This is the first line that introduces something predominant in my playing, which is the deliberate use of the minor 3rd (Db) and major 6th (G) juxtaposed against each other. Ordinarily the dominant 7th (G#) would probably be used. This sound creates a certain texture I've always liked.

Hotline #5 musical notation. The staff shows a sequence of notes with bends (PO) and fret numbers (13, 9, 10, 8, 10). The guitar tablature (TAB) is provided below the staff, showing fret numbers (13, 9, 10, 8, 10) and string numbers (3, 2, 1, 3). The notation includes a 13th fret bend (PO) on the 3rd string, a 9th fret bend (PO) on the 2nd string, and a 10th fret bend (PO) on the 1st string. The guitar tablature shows the corresponding fret numbers and string numbers.

HOTLINE # 5 (cont.)

F7

Musical notation for Hotline #5 (cont.) in F7. The notation consists of two staves. The top staff is a treble clef with a key signature of one flat (Bb). The bottom staff is a guitar TAB with a key signature of one flat (Bb). The TAB is labeled 'T A B' and has a '4' under the first fret. The notation includes a '4' under the first fret, a '1' under the second fret, and three '3's under the third, fourth, and fifth frets. A circled '12' is written below the TAB staff.

HOTLINE # 6

This is something Texas blues guitarist Albert Collins might play, and it should be played with real punch. Experiment and try playing it with just your fingers.

Bb7

Eb7

Musical notation for Hotline #6. The notation consists of two staves. The top staff is a treble clef with a key signature of two flats (Bb and Eb). The bottom staff is a guitar TAB with a key signature of two flats (Bb and Eb). The TAB is labeled 'T A B' and has a '3' under the third fret. The notation includes a '3' under the third fret, a '3' under the fourth fret, a '2' under the fifth fret, and a '1' under the sixth fret. A circled '1' is written below the TAB staff. The notation also includes a '3' under the third fret, a '2' under the fourth fret, and a '1' under the fifth fret. A circled '2' is written below the TAB staff.

Bb7

Musical notation for Hotline #6. The notation consists of two staves. The top staff is a treble clef with a key signature of two flats (Bb and Eb). The bottom staff is a guitar TAB with a key signature of two flats (Bb and Eb). The TAB is labeled 'T A B' and has a '3' under the third fret. The notation includes a '3' under the third fret, a '1' under the fourth fret, a '3' under the fifth fret, a '1' under the sixth fret, a '3' under the seventh fret, a '3' under the eighth fret, a '1' under the ninth fret, a '3' under the tenth fret, a '1' under the eleventh fret, a '4' under the twelfth fret, a '3' under the thirteenth fret, a '1' under the fourteenth fret, a '1' under the fifteenth fret, a '3' under the sixteenth fret, and a '1' under the seventeenth fret. A circled '3' is written below the TAB staff. The notation also includes a '3' under the third fret, a '2' under the fourth fret, and a '1' under the fifth fret. A circled '4' is written below the TAB staff.

HOTLINE # 7

Put a lot of 'grease' on the slide from the Ab note to the Bb. The quarter note triplet should sound exaggerated and drawn out here.

Eb7

HOTLINE # 8

The slide from the Fb (E) grace note to the Eb should be played real punchy. The slide up to the second Bb eighth note in bar two occurs here again.

Bb7

HOTLINE # 9

This line incorporates the use of "Theme Development" taking the phrase in bar one and developing it both rhythmically and tonally in bar two, stretching it out a bit.

F7

Eb7

HOTLINE #10

The first 2 triplets in bar one are interesting. The same leap occurs from the first Bb eighth note on the E string to the second Bb eighth on the B string, and the eighth note rest between them creates a gap, almost like a deliberate stumble. Once again a certain tension is created. The quick 16th notes in bar 2 create a little break from the basic triplet feel that's been pretty constant so far.

Handwritten musical notation for guitar, showing a treble clef staff with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a bass staff with a key signature of one flat (Bb). The notation includes a Bb7 chord, a melodic line with a triplet, and a bass line with a triplet. The piece ends with a double bar line and a repeat sign.

HOTLINE #11

This line uses Theme Development again, taking the phrase in the first bar and stretching it out (quite a bit this time) in bars three and four.

[illegible]

HOTLINE #12

Note the Hammer-On in bar one. The double stop (using 2 notes at once) in bar 2 puts the minor 3rd and major 6th flat against each other creating that sound and tension I mentioned earlier in the book.

Eb7

3 1 2 4 1 3 1 4 2 1 4 1 3 1 1

(5) (6)

HOTLINE #13

The valuable part of this line is the position it's played in on the guitar neck. It is like playing in the relative minor key (Gm7 in this case), which is a good position for playing major Pentatonic lines in the tonic key (Bb in this case).

Bb7

4 1 1 4 # 2 3 1 1 3 1 3

(7) (8)

HOTLINE #14

This is a four bar line, and a lot of the notes sort of jump around. The phrasing has the quality of stopping and starting, sort of a stumbling effect.

F7 Eb7

3 1 1 4 3 1 1 4 1 1 4 # 2 3 1

(9) (10)

HOTLINE #14 (cont.)

Bb7 **F7**

Musical notation for Hotline #14 (cont.). The top staff is in treble clef with a key signature of two flats (Bb, Eb). The bottom staff is in bass clef with a key signature of two flats (Bb, Eb). The notation includes fingerings (1-4) and a 'HO' (harmonic) marking. The piece ends with a double bar line.

HOTLINE #15

Double stops are used in this line a lot. The first bar I find to be very funky. It should be played with the fingers rather than the pick. I use my first and second fingers on the B and E strings and my thumb on the G string.

Bb7 **Eb7**

Musical notation for Hotline #15. The top staff is in treble clef with a key signature of two flats (Bb, Eb). The bottom staff is in bass clef with a key signature of two flats (Bb, Eb). The notation includes fingerings (1-4) and a '3' (triple) marking. The piece ends with a double bar line.

HOTLINE #16

This line should be played with the fingers also (except for the last half of bar 2). The 2nd and 3rd fingers play the notes on the G and B strings, and the thumb plays the notes on the D string.

Bb7

Musical notation for Hotline #16. The top staff is in treble clef with a key signature of two flats (Bb, Eb). The bottom staff is in bass clef with a key signature of two flats (Bb, Eb). The notation includes fingerings (1-4) and a '3' (triple) marking. The piece ends with a double bar line.

HOTLINE #17

The 2nd bar of this line should be played with a slight crescendo of feeling (more so than volume).

Eb7

3 3 1 3 1 3 3 1 3 3 1 2 1 1 3 3

(5) (6)

Bb7

(7)

HOTLINE #18

Here again is the use of the minor 3rd and major 6th color. Also, the way the notes jump around in almost random fashion creates a certain tension.

Bb7 F7

4 2 3 2 1 3 2 1 3 1

(8) (9)

HOTLINE #19

The phrasing in this line should be very punchy as in the Texas blues style playing like Albert Collins.

Measures 1-11 of Hotline #19. The notation is in treble and bass staves. Chords Eb7 and Bb7 are indicated. Fingering numbers 1, 2, 3 are shown. A 'B' (bend) and 'PO' (pull-off) are marked. Measure numbers (10) and (11) are at the bottom.

Measure 12 of Hotline #19. The notation is in treble and bass staves. Chord F7 is indicated. Fingering numbers 1, 2, 3 are shown. Measure number (12) is at the bottom.

This ends the 12 bar Blues section.

HOTLINE #20

The first bar here is virtually a G7add9 arpeggio. Bar two uses a bend on the G string from C to D and then plays the 2nd D on the B string which is a classic blues style of playing.

Measures 1-8 of Hotline #20. The notation is in treble and bass staves. Chords G7 and G7(C7) are indicated. Fingering numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 are shown. A 'B' (bend) is marked. Measure numbers (12) and (11) are at the bottom.

HOTLINE #21

This line could be the opening line for a slow blues, but sounds good at an up tempo shuffle feel as well.

Hotline #21 musical notation. The guitar line (top staff) is in treble clef and features a C7 chord at the start, an F7 chord in the middle, and a C7 chord at the end. The bass line (bottom staff) is in bass clef and includes fret numbers (8, 11, 10, 8, 10, 8, 10, 6, 7, 7, 10, 12, 8, 10, 8, 9, 13) and a 5th fret marker. The notation includes triplets and various rhythmic values.

HOTLINE #22

This line sounds best when played as the last two bars of a slow blues progression.

Hotline #22 musical notation. The guitar line (top staff) is in treble clef and features a C7 chord at the start, an F7 chord in the middle, and a C7 and G7 chord at the end. The bass line (bottom staff) is in bass clef and includes fret numbers (8, 7, 6, 8, 7, 6, 8, 5, 5, 8, 6, 5, 9, 8, 10) and a 5th fret marker. The notation includes triplets and various rhythmic values.

HOTLINE #23

This line could be played in either the 3rd and 4th, or 6th and 7th bars of a blues progression. The 16th note triplet in the 2nd half of bar one sounds different than written, so check the phrasing with the tape.

Hotline #23 musical notation. The guitar line (top staff) is in treble clef and features a C7 chord at the start, an (F7) chord in the middle, and a C7 and (G7) chord at the end. The bass line (bottom staff) is in bass clef and includes fret numbers (8, 11, 8, 10, 8, 10, 10, 7, 8, 10, 10, 10, 10, 7). The notation includes triplets and various rhythmic values.

HOTLINE #24

Again, here is the use of minor 3rd and major 6th tension. This line could be considered incomplete in that it shouldn't end on the C quarter note, but keep going. Maybe you could add to this line.

C7 (8VA)

3 3 1 3 3 1 4 1 4 1 1

PO 4 1 3 2 1 4 PO 2 4 2 PO PO 4 2 1 4 2

TAB 14 13 11 13 10 11 13 10 10 13 10 12 11 10 12 11 12 10 12 10 9 12 10

HOTLINE #25

This line works well as an opening 4 bars to a shuffle. The phrasing is tricky here in the first 16th note triplet, and sounds best when played with the fingers.

C7

4 3 4 3 4 3 1 3 1

PO 3

TAB 8 6 7 6 8 8 6 8 5 5 8 5 8 5

C7

3 1 3 3 1 3

HO PO 3

TAB 8 5 8 7 5 7 5 8

HOTLINE #26

This could be the opening 4 bars of a 12 bar blues. Watch the 16th note triplet in the 1st bar. This lick sounds best at a shuffle tempo.

8VA

A7 D7

TAB

A7

TAB

HOTLINE #27

This line works well played in the 3rd and 4th bars of a shuffle blues. The notes in the 1st bar basically outline a C major arpeggio and bar 2 starts with the same arpeggio down an octave. That's the stuff that gives your playing form.

C7 (F7)

TAB

HOTLINE #28

This is more of a 'Jazz' line. It begins by using 4th intervals in the 1st bar. The first 4 eighth notes of bar 2 basically spell a D chord (bending the F note allows it to be major or minor, or both).

Dm7 (D7#9)

Hotline #28 is a jazz line in D minor. The notation is shown in two systems: a standard staff with a treble clef and a tablature staff. The standard staff shows a melody starting with a half rest, followed by eighth notes D4, E4, F4, G4, A4, Bb4, C5, and D5. The first four eighth notes (D4, E4, F4, G4) are grouped together. The second system shows a descending line: D5, C5, Bb4, A4, G4, F4, E4, D4. The tablature staff shows the corresponding fret numbers: 5, 5, 5, 6, 7, 8, 8, 5, 5, 6, 7, 7, 5, 8, 8, 5, 7.

HOTLINE #29

This line is based on a pattern using the A minor Pentatonic scale. The pattern is established with the first 4 notes after the pick-up, and descends in triadic intervals.

Am7

Hotline #29 is a line in A minor. The notation is shown in two systems: a standard staff with a treble clef and a tablature staff. The standard staff shows a melody starting with a half rest, followed by eighth notes A4, B4, C5, D5, E5, D5, C5, B4, A4, G4, F4, E4, D4, C4. The first four notes after the pick-up (A4, B4, C5, D5) are grouped together. The second system shows a descending line: D5, C5, B4, A4, G4, F4, E4, D4, C4, B3, A3, G3, F3, E3, D3, C3. The tablature staff shows the corresponding fret numbers: 5, 5, 5, 7, 8, 5, 5, 7, 7, 5, 5, 7, 7, 5, 5, 8, 7, 5.

HOTLINE #30

This line basically just runs the C major scale (G Mixolydian mode) and is good in a static chord situation, or could resolve at the end of the 4 bars to a C7 chord.

G7

Hotline #30 is a line in G Mixolydian mode. The notation is shown in two systems: a standard staff with a treble clef and a tablature staff. The standard staff shows a melody starting with a half rest, followed by eighth notes G4, A4, B4, C5, D5, E5, F#5, G5, F#5, E5, D5, C5, B4, A4, G4. The first four notes after the pick-up (G4, A4, B4, C5) are grouped together. The second system shows a descending line: G5, F#5, E5, D5, C5, B4, A4, G4, F#5, E5, D5, C5, B4, A4, G4. The tablature staff shows the corresponding fret numbers: 5, 8, 5, 7, 8, 5, 7, 9, 5, 7, 9, 5, 7, 9, 6, 8, 10.

HOTLINE #30 (cont.)

Musical notation for Hotline #30 (cont.). The top staff is a treble clef with a key signature of one flat (Bb). The bottom staff is a guitar TAB with six lines. The notation includes fingerings (1, 4, 3, 4, 1, 2, 4, 4, 2, 1, 4, 4, 1, 2, 4) and fret numbers (7, 10, 10, 10, 7, 8, 10, 10, 8, 7, 10, 10, 7, 9, 10).

HOTLINE #31

This line is based on a Diminished scale and is a II V I chord change series. There is a diminished scale 4th pattern set up in the 2nd half of the 1st bar which continues through the 2nd bar.

Musical notation for Hotline #31. The top staff is a treble clef with a key signature of one flat (Bb). The bottom staff is a guitar TAB with six lines. The notation includes fingerings (3, 1, 3, 4, 1, 2, 1, 1, 3, 3, 1, 2, 3, 4, 1, 1, 3, 3, 1, 4) and fret numbers (8, 10, 11, 8, 9, 7, 7, 10, 10, 8, 9, 11, 12, 10, 10, 13, 13, 11, 15). Chord symbols D13b9 and Gmaj7 are indicated.

HOTLINE #32

This line is based on the same Diminished scale as #31 but in a different key, and is also a II V progression. The diminished scale is almost always resolving to the tonic note or chord. The scale is a series of half steps and whole steps: G Ab Bb Cb Db D E F G = Ab diminished (G7b9) resolving to C.

Musical notation for Hotline #32. The top staff is a treble clef with a key signature of one flat (Bb). The bottom staff is a guitar TAB with six lines. The notation includes fingerings (1, 4, 2, 1, 4, 3, 4, 1, 2, 1, 4, 3, 2, 1, 4, 2) and fret numbers (3, 6, 4, 3, 6, 5, 6, 3, 4, 3, 6, 5, 3, 2, 5, 3). Chord symbols G13b9 and Cmaj7 are indicated.

HOTLINE #33

This line is based on the use of an Fmaj7 arpeggio against a G7 tonality (once again, the G Mixolydian mode or C scale). A 4 note pattern is set up in the last half of the 3rd bar continuing to the lines end.

G7

First system (Measures 1-4):

- Measure 1: Quarter rest, quarter note G2 (fret 12), quarter note A2 (fret 13), quarter note B2 (fret 14).
- Measure 2: Quarter note C3 (fret 15), quarter note B2 (fret 14), quarter note A2 (fret 13), quarter note G2 (fret 12).
- Measure 3: Quarter note F#2 (fret 11), quarter note E2 (fret 10), quarter note D2 (fret 9), quarter note C2 (fret 8).
- Measure 4: Quarter note B1 (fret 7), quarter note A1 (fret 6), quarter note G1 (fret 5), quarter note F#1 (fret 4).

Second system (Measures 5-8):

- Measure 5: Quarter note E2 (fret 9), quarter note D2 (fret 8), quarter note C2 (fret 7), quarter note B1 (fret 6).
- Measure 6: Quarter note A1 (fret 5), quarter note G1 (fret 4), quarter note F#1 (fret 3), quarter note E1 (fret 2).
- Measure 7: Quarter note D1 (fret 1), quarter note C1 (fret 0), quarter note B0 (fret -1), quarter note A0 (fret -2).
- Measure 8: Quarter note G0 (fret -3), quarter note F#0 (fret -4), quarter note E0 (fret -5), quarter note D0 (fret -6).

HOTLINE #34

This is a standard II V I chord progression. The scale is similar to the diminished scale presented earlier, but this one is half Diminished and half Whole Tone (Ab Melodic minor = G Ab Bb Cb Db Eb F G).

Dm7b5

G7#5

Cmaj7

First system (Measures 1-4):

- Measure 1: Quarter note Bb2 (fret 10), quarter note Ab2 (fret 9), quarter note Gb2 (fret 8), quarter note Fb2 (fret 7).
- Measure 2: Quarter note Eb2 (fret 6), quarter note Db2 (fret 5), quarter note Cb2 (fret 4), quarter note Bb1 (fret 3).
- Measure 3: Quarter note Ab1 (fret 2), quarter note Gb1 (fret 1), quarter note Fb1 (fret 0), quarter note Eb0 (fret -1).
- Measure 4: Quarter note Db0 (fret -2), quarter note Cb0 (fret -3), quarter note Bb0 (fret -4), quarter note Ab0 (fret -5).

Second system (Measures 5-8):

- Measure 5: Quarter note G2 (fret 12), quarter note Ab2 (fret 11), quarter note Bb2 (fret 10), quarter note Cb2 (fret 9).
- Measure 6: Quarter note Db2 (fret 8), quarter note Eb2 (fret 7), quarter note F2 (fret 6), quarter note G2 (fret 5).
- Measure 7: Quarter note Ab2 (fret 4), quarter note Bb2 (fret 3), quarter note C2 (fret 2), quarter note Db2 (fret 1).
- Measure 8: Quarter note Eb2 (fret 0), quarter note F2 (fret 1), quarter note G2 (fret 2), quarter note Ab2 (fret 3).